

Check list for leaving your home unoccupied

You're going on vacation! This should be a time of relaxation and fun for you and your family. Coming home to discover your home has been broken into is not a pleasant homecoming. The following simple safety tips are offered to help you secure your home.

One Month Before You Leave:

- Check for and repair any broken windows or doors.
- Install good-quality locks on all doors and windows
- Request the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) volunteers perform a "Vacation House Check" on your residence while you are gone by completing a Vacation Check Form and mailing or delivering it to the Kentwood Police Department.

One Week Before You Leave:

- Call the Newspaper and cancel delivery while you are gone.
- Notify the Post Office of your absence. Have mail forwarded or saved for you at the post office.
- Arrange to have someone (a neighbor, friend or relative):
- Pick up your mail if other arrangements were not made
- Mow your lawn/shovel your walk
- Pick up circulars, etc. from your driveway, yard, and entrance
- Feed your pets, water plants, check heat is on etc.
- Keep an eye out for any suspicious activity.

One Day Before You Leave:

- Mow your lawn/shovel your walk
- Secure all lawn equipment, tools, etc. in locked shed or garage
- Take your valuables-jewelry, cash etc. to your bank safe deposit box
- Set timers or photo-electric sensors and make sure they're functioning as intended

The Day You Leave:

- Make sure gas appliances are completely off
- Unplug small appliances
- Turn down volume of telephone so it cannot be heard from outside
- Double check your electric timers
- If you leave a car in the driveway, make sure it is parked up against the garage door and is securely locked
- Make sure all doors and windows are locked
- Leave a key to your house, garage etc. with your "emergency contact"
- Leave your telephone number and address with your emergency contact and with VIPS if it is known ahead of departure
- Put a radio on a timer device to give the illusion of occupancy
- Do a last-minute walk around the outside of your house to make sure everything is secure
- Optional but wise: Turn off water to automatic washer to avoid possible damage from a split hose, turn off your water heater if you will be gone for an extended period. During winter, remember to take precautions against frozen water pipes